

Approved For Release 2004/10/13 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300360005-8

*Reg. 1 Natl. Student Assn.
Reg. 1 Natl. Union of Students
CIA 5-01.1 Ed. Op.*

Students and the CIA

The American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has provided the influential National Student Association (NSA) with funds to support the association's international activities and even to pay the rent on its Washington headquarters. It has also recruited agents from its top officers.

Following advertisements that Ramparts in its March issue "will document how the CIA has infiltrated and subverted the world of American student leaders," the NSA conceded that it had received CIA funds from the early 1950's up to 1966.

Around 1950 when the cold war was raging, the Communist-dominated International Union of Students (IUS) was sponsoring World Student Congresses at which American students were "represented" by a Communist dominated affiliate of the IUS. The NSA was on the outside looking in.

Given these circumstances, it is reasonable that the CIA would have wished to encourage as much NSA activity abroad as possible. If NSA felt it was the true spokesman for American students abroad and if it was also short of funds for such activity, as seems to have been the case, it explains (but does not justify) the association's acceptance of CIA support.

NSA policy over the intervening years shows no compromise of its independent position as a result of the arrangement. It has long been dominated by a liberal element which opposed McCarthyism, apartheid, Dominican Republic-type intervention, and the bombing in Vietnam. NSA policy has certainly not been dictated by the CIA.

But despite the association's independent position on political matters, there can be no doubt as to the unwisdom of its having carried on a covert relationship with a government intelligence organization. It made the same mistake that some leading universities made when they became involved in secret research contracts for the CIA.

This arrangement between the CIA and NSA has placed the whole student association under a cloud of suspicion. It may now be so compromised that it will have to give way to an entirely new and untarnished organization.

Many thousands of American students and professors are abroad for legitimate and highly commendable purposes. Because of the unwisdom of past NSA officials, all are now, in some measure, suspect. We trust that from this whole affair important lessons will be learned.